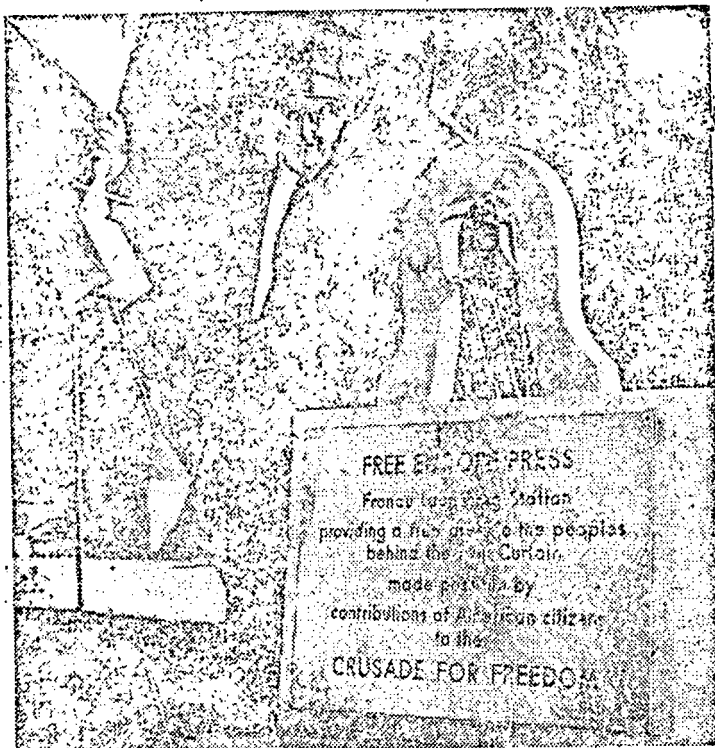


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CAPITAL REPORT



AMERICAN VISITOR inspects RFE Free Europe balloon at launch-
ing site in Munich, West Germany.

Army 'Head Shrinkers' Rap RFE Meteorologist

By FULTON LEWIS, JR.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 9.—My experience with Pentagon psy-
chiatrists in the Fletcher Bartholomew case suggests that the pro-
fession is sometimes sicker than the patient.

Among psychiatrists, I'm sure, are many careful and dedicated
men. With the rank and file, however, there seems to be a cult,
conjured around the highly questionable speculations of a highly
questionable high priest, Sigmund Freud, and a casualness in
diagnosis that is frightening.

To affix a mental rap to any man is a serious business. To do
so on the strength of hearsay and secret reports from his enemies
who have a personal stake in discrediting what he may say in the
future should require the most meticulous investigation and study.

This was not so in the case of Fletcher Bartholomew, me-
teorologist for the Free Europe balloon operation in Munich, and
it is the more frightening to find the doctors in the Pentagon
attempting to rationalize how the original doctors were right.

BARTHOLOMEW'S FRIENDS, who had been his constant
companions and who blew their lids in protest when he, a civilian,
was incarcerated in the mental ward of the Army hospital in
Munich, were too close to him to notice his symptoms, the psy-
chiatrists tell me. This is part of the accepted ritual, but so far
as I'm concerned it is hogwash.

Also hogwash is their explanation as to why Bartholomew
was sent home with his wrists, ankles and head strapped to a
stretcher, leaving his wife and three children in Munich, not know-
ing what had happened to him.

Bartholomew, say the Pentagon rationalists, had been "diag-
nosed" (by an Army social worker) as having a persecution com-
plex. I suggested that the Army Medical Corps had abundant
facilities at the Munich hospital for the treatment of mental illness
and by treating him there, he could at least have remained with his
family.

The explanation for this was that the best treatment for this
kind of mental difficulty is to remove the patient from the scene

of his past environs and separate him from the society in which he
has been living. For this reason, they said, he was shipped back
to the States under "restraint," including powerful drugs ad-
ministered by hypodermic. The psychiatrist who told me this was
quite triumphant in making his point.

The facts are these:

Fletcher Bartholomew was lured into the Army hospital in
Munich on Saturday, July 28, 1956.

He and his wife and children were already packed, some of
their belongings already shipped and the remainder crated, waiting
to go. They were scheduled to leave Munich by automobile very
early Tuesday morning for a leisurely 10-day tour down through
the Bavarian and Swiss Alps to Genoa, Italy, there to catch an
Italian liner for New York.

THUS, IF THE ARMY doctors (and the social worker) in
Munich had done nothing at all, Fletcher Bartholomew would have
been separated as of Tuesday morning, July 31, from the sur-
roundings that were supposedly troubling him. Instead, in the
name of "treatment," he was held in the hospital, heavily drugged
and under 24-hour guard, until Thursday, August 2, and then
shipped home under the most distressing circumstances imaginable.

The story fails to make sense. It makes less sense when you
consider that the entire business was illegal anyway and the Army
admits it. The Army is forbidden to hospitalize or treat any
civilian, except civilian employees of the Army itself, and Bartholo-
mew was not that.

The Army's only excuse is that the Consul General, Edward
Page, Jr., said he had some trouble on his hands and asked us for
help. The Consul General didn't have any authority, either.